



53/

Fig. 209. Patterns on Stools.

a combination of the patterns of a diamond and a parallel line (Fig. 211, b), and this suggested a string of cowrie shells. The similarity of the two is shown by Figure 210. It seems possible to me that in this case a further relationship between the cowrie shell and the diamond pattern plays a role. The Togo Negroes, for instance (according to an oral communication from the missionary, C. Spiess), recognize in the cowrie shell an image of the vulva; since ancient times the diamond pattern has been viewed in the same way by the Pangwe. After the introduction of the cowrie shell, the Pangwe immediately recognized its similarity to the diamond and transferred to the former the symbolism of the latter. As in Togo, the cowrie shell is regarded among the Pangwe as a symbol that brings good fortune, and, as such, it is applied to medicine horns or hung on anchored nets as a hunting medicine. Another symbol that likewise /Fig. 210 appears here in the original text/ brings good luck is the diamond which they paint onto their skins with redwood (a color that brings luck!) or tattoo onto their skins as a permanent pattern. We find



Fig. 210. Strings of Cowrie Shells.

here a remarkable contradiction in their conceptions. As we have seen, the sexual act was performed in connection

754 enemy happens to be dancing with other people at some festivity
674 and in the general excitement does not notice when the missile
hits him.

754 As a preventive against zō, a medicine is recommended
751 which consists of:

- 278 1. Albizzia fastigiata (E. Mey.) Oliv. (sō'ne), ground resin;
2. Musanga smithii R. Br., ground involucre leaf (it is
slippery); /149/
3. Pouzolzia guineensis Benth, Urticacea (mbōgāñ III),
its leaves ground;

Fig. 52. Magic Medicine of a Sō Thrower,
i.e., a Sorcerer or Poisoner.

4. Heckeria subpeltata (Wild) Kunth. (abō'mēdzā'n), stalk
scraped off;
5. Corynanthe pachyceras K. Sch. (evē), its leaves ground;
6. an unidentifiable Euphorbiacea (ayo), its leaves ground.

[302] This medicine is added to the red wood which is smeared on
the body as a festive decoration.

2. Medicines for Acquiring Luck and Warding Off Misfortune

777 I combine these apparently different medicines because
751 there is a number of them that serve both purposes, the acquisition of good fortune and protection against misfortune. Medicines for warfare, for instance, give one unerring aim as well as protection against bullets. The majority, to be sure, are specific means for obtaining luck or warding off misfortune. The Pangwe designate them as biā'ñ because they are intended to guard against an illness, for he conceives misfortune or the endangering of his good fortune as an illness. We shall do best to take over this conception and to call these devices "medicines." The medicines for good luck are supposed to bring, above all, wealth and good fortune in love, shooting, setting traps, catching fish, and wrestling. The medicines for wealth (biā'ñ akū'ma) are based in part on the

- 777 conceptions developed in connection with the veneration of
 751 ancestors, concerning the influence of the ancestors, who live
 where Nsambe does, on the terrestrial well-being of their
 754 descendants. The most important of the medicines for wealth,
 777 atum or aseb, that is, the Mekuk medicine, is based on the ideas
 of sorcery which I discussed in the previous section /Ed., not
 translated/. The skulls needed for the ancestor cult are not in
 [769] this case those from relatives who died a natural death, but from
 those who were murdered secretly by sorcery (poisoning). Each
biāñ akū'ma, therefore, is a nsōm, a sin. The murder victims,
 [826] or rather their souls, are called mekūk (1). A person who keeps

1. Etymologically related to nkūk,
 "upper part of the body." Perhaps
 we have here an intentional circum-
 locution, because the Pangwe like
 to avoid the real designation for their
mesōm (sins).

the skulls in order to acquire wealth is called e mōde a bēlē
mekūk (= e mōde a n'a mekūk), that is, the man who has the
 Mekuk. I have known a Mekuk man who had no less than ten
 skulls of his murdered relatives in his house. In addition, the
 Mekuk man possesses magical devices which he sells on request
 together with the skulls in exchange for an excessive payment from
 people who themselves want to become Mekuk men. The latter
 are of course only sorcerers, that is, people who -- as was said
 in Section 12 /Ed., not translated/ -- receive the power to
 practice sorcery in their youth through a medicine, but who per-
 haps until then had not yet used their power and now want to train
 themselves in the specialized field of Mekuk medicine. For this
 purpose, their teacher demands that they murder a close relative,
 usually a father or mother, and bring him the skull. He himself
 will give them in exchange an older /150/ skull from his own
 collection and in addition frequently the back bones. The first
 [608] skull of a Mekuk collection is therefore one of a stranger and has
 already been effective as a medicine. It is not an actual ancestral

754 skull, but may be regarded as such because all the Mekuk people
777 enter into a kind of kinship relation with one another and the
[608] skull medicine that has been effective for one will likewise be
successful for the others. In this way the new Mekuk man is able
to go on murdering and chooses his victims from among his
closest relatives, older brothers, sisters, brothers-in-law, uncles,
etc., in order to become rich through the mediation of the souls
of his victims who do not suspect that the sorcery (or poison) of
their dear relative made possible their sudden reunion with
Nsambe. Wealth acquired in this way naturally also includes the
inheritance which is thereby more speedily obtained. The effect
of the magical medicine is described in the following manner.
The Mekuk man places the medicine in a cloth and offers this
to his brother, for instance. If the brother has "sense," he may
say: "Oh, formerly you used to buy many pieces of cloth and
gave none of them to me! What's the idea of this piece of cloth
now? I don't want it!" Then the Mekuk man himself becomes
ill. The Mekuk man may offer his hand to his brother when he
returns from a journey, having first sprinkled a medicine into it.
Most frequently, however, the medicine is given to a cock which,
according to one informant, has its tail feathers plucked out; the
cock is then given as a present to a relative home from a journey.
If the relative eats the animal, he is supposed to die, but if he
refuses it or secretly throws the animal away, the Mekuk man
will become ill and die. In still other cases, the medicine is
poured into a tobacco pipe, bush salt, or food. Whether any of
this has a physiological effect or not must remain undecided, as
I have already said on pages 3 and 4.

Even the Mekuk sorcerer believes that a failure of his attempt
would result in his death, as we saw in Section 12 /Ed., not trans-
lated/ in the case of the wicked sorcerers. It is evidently assumed
that if the person attacked notices that he is an intended victim,
he himself goes over to the attack and on his part tries to get rid
of the enemy. That is to say, according to the Pangwe conception,
he sends his sorcery against that of the attacker. It is certain that
this belief considerably limits the number of relatives murdered.

754 It is not the bark container known to us from Malan that is
 777 used to keep the Mekuk skulls, but rather a chamber dug under
 the floor of the house (Fig. 53). I saw a bark box used only once,
 placed on tall props reaching almost to the roof. The chest is
 divided into two sections by means of a dip in the bottom, and it
 is carefully leveled and smeared with red wood (hence, the name
atum from atūm, "section, /151/ /Fig. 53 appears here in the
 original text/ room," which refers to the entire medicine); it
 is covered up by a piece of bark and a thin layer of dirt and thus
 remains hidden from strangers' eyes. Frequently a chest is placed
 over it also, or the little underground chamber is located under a
 bed. On the step-like raised part the medicines (b) are kept inside
 a circle made of plantain pieces (a); these medicines include
nsū, above all, and furthermore bark scraped off the Passifloraceae
 [278] Ophiocaulon cissampeloides Hook f. and Adenia lobata (Jacq.)
 Engl. (undöndöle a ndžik) (1). leaves of evülème or ayöhe-beyu.

1. Also used as fish poison (see Vol. I,
 p. 83).

important because of the nodules in the leaves which make them
 look perforated like the ewu of a dead magician, and other things.
 Below the step the skulls (c) are set up in a semicircle so that they
 face the medicine.

[769] The skulls are cared for in a manner similar to the customary
 manner of treating the Malan skulls. Unlike the latter, they are
 not served food every day, but nevertheless frequently; sometimes
 chickens are slaughtered for them, and they are bathed in chicken
 blood and have chicken meat set before them.

[152] This medicine, which is unknown in the northern region (Jaunde),
 is quite widespread among the Fang and is the subject of many tales
 and stories which make all light men /Ed., men with light skin
 color?/ break out in a cold sweat. My boys were so excited by the
 stories that they maintained they could not sleep if they kept think-
 ing of these hideous Mekuk. Thus it is told, among other things,
 that the Mekuk walk up and down in their little room at night and
 make a hullabaloo or even come out of their room and thrash



Fig. 53. Underground Chamber of a Mekuk Sorcerer,
Cross-section.

(a) Circle made of plantain pieces, (b) magic medicines, (c) skulls of murdered relatives.

the Mekuk man's house companions in their sleep, so that they wake up the next day completely beaten up. They are also supposed to steal money and goods in order to take them to the Mekuk man. In short, the Mekuk stories remind one of the experiences of the man who wanted to learn to be afraid /Ed., in one of Grimm's fairy tales/.

7:7 Other medicines for wealth that utilize the power of the souls are more innocent; they do not require the murder of relatives nor care of the skulls. Instead, their powers are derived from the
[824] habitation of the souls, the Copaifera tessmannii Harms (oyōh). The Mekuk skulls must be included only in the event the medicine man already possesses some. The procedure as a rule is as follows. The father of the person concerned goes with a medicine man, /152/ and both clear an area under a large Copaifera. Then a leaf vessel filled with water is set up, and into this some of the bark of the
[891] Copaifera is scraped nine times (three times three); furthermore a stone from the stomach of the crocodile is placed in it if one is available. A peculiar test of the worthiness of the young man is now given. Various objects are placed together in three piles: on
[45] the first are placed steamed cassava (women's food) and a basket
[897] (ebā'dā) carried only by old women because it has a small capacity; on the second, a rifle, a bundle of vegetables (ngon) with fish, brass ornaments, cowrie shells, and a piece of cloth, all of which are things that delight young people; on the third pile is placed
[293] a fly swatter (implement of the chiefs), a foot ring made of ivory,
[622] and a boiled chicken, in other words, such things as are allotted to chiefs. Now the young man is brought to the piles. "If he has sense," he will go to the last pile and consume the chicken. In this

- 777 case he has successfully passed the test, is washed with the water from the leaf vessel, and receives the crocodile's stone (Fig. 54) which will help him in the future to become a great chief and very wealthy. If he goes to the pile on which the things for young people are heaped, he will become a philanderer, and as such he will waste his money and come to nought. If he should go to the first pile, he is sure to become insane.

777
538 Many tales portray the effects of medicines for wealth which Essamniaböge makes for one of his sons, usually Ekute E., who has sought him out in the land of the spirits. Here, too, a place is always cleared under a *Copaifera*, and Essamniaböge then has an entire miniature village set up, with many huts or other



Fig. 54

Medicine for Wealth (stone from a crocodile's stomach, tied between little sticks so as not to be lost).

things to symbolize the treasures that can be expected. In addition, Essamniaböge gives his son boxes which contain helpful souls who later will obtain wealth for the person, just like the little men of our fairy tales. Also, as frequently happens in our tales, the conclusion is always that all treasures, especially the houses and wives, disappear at one stroke, usually through the fault of the person concerned, and the man who was wealthy a moment ago is again as poor and miserable as before. Such a tale is reproduced here.

Ekute Essamniaböge among the Souls

539
777 Ekute once said to himself, "Oh, I would like to go to the place where my mother was born!" Ekute had only his mother

539
777

and three brothers in the village; otherwise he possessed absolutely nothing, not even a wife, nor did his /153/ brothers have anything. For this reason he set out to visit his relatives on his mother's side, that is, the souls. He soon came to a large forest full of animal trails, and it was not long before he met a porcupine that had hung a bell around his hunting dog's neck so it would track down other porcupines, "for," said the porcupine to Ekute, "the others have eaten my mother's cassava." Thereupon Ekute said, "Why is it that you kill other porcupines; are you not one yourself?" Then the porcupine answered, "That is an affair (1) caused by the souls. Turn around and don't go to them."

1. dzām, coastal English, "palaver."

Ekute, however, went on. He soon met a bird that was setting up a trap to catch birds. Then Ekute asked again, "Why do you want to kill other birds; are you not a bird yourself?" The bird answered, "Oh, that is because of the affair with the souls. Turn around and don't go into their land!" Ekute went on, however, and met two pigs that were setting up a pitfall to kill other pigs. In answer to Ekute's question, one pig said that they were doing it because other pigs were in the habit of eating their mother's cassava. Then Ekute asked once more, "Why do you want to kill other pigs when you yourselves belong to the family of pigs?" To this the pigs answered, "That is because of the souls; turn around and go back to the land of men!" Ekute did not want to take their advice, whereupon the pig said, "Ah, Ekute, I thought that by now you had finally developed some sense, but I see that you are just as stupid as before. Go your way to wherever you please!" Then Ekute encountered an antelope that had set up a fixed net. He asked the antelope, "Oh, what are you doing here with the fixed net?" Thereupon the antelope said in reply, "How can you ask such stupid questions, Ekute; I am here to catch the other antelopes." At that Ekute was very surprised, but the antelope asked, "Where do you want to go?" Ekute said, "I want to visit the relatives of my mother." The animal replied, "In that case just go along the path that I have

- 777 taken, and keep going straight until you arrive at a deserted clearing;
539 there you will be close to the village." Then Ekute went on and passed many other animals, elephants, kudu, and so forth, all of which were engaged in a hunting drive. He went on for a long time, for three days, until he finally came to a village where a man was sitting, and the man said, "Now then, where do you want to go?" Ekute answered, "Oh, I want to find the sons of my mother; am I not on the right track here?" To this the man replied, "Yes, indeed, just go into the next village, there you will see them all." So Ekute went on and came to a large village that was full of animals. They were all there, the antelope, the pig, the eagle, the dog, the leopard, the elephant; /154/ oh my! Then said Ekute: "Am I not in the village of my grandfather here?" The animals confirmed this. Then Ekute went into the meeting house and wanted to sit down, whereupon many voices called out about him, "Oh, oh, what do you think you're doing, sitting down on us?" Then he sat down elsewhere, but as he did so a voice said, "Oh, Ekute, look out for my feet; why do you have to sit down just here?" Ekute, however, saw none of the souls, because human beings cannot see souls. Thereupon he said to the invisible beings, "Oh, I just wanted to visit my grandfather and his relatives; if you don't like me, I shall go back again. Whenever I sit down somewhere, I am told, 'Not here,' but I don't see anybody, so what shall I do?" His grandfather finally came shortly thereafter; he took a leaf bag and put medicine into Ekute's ears. The latter immediately fell down dead and awoke as a soul. Then he saw all the people, many, many, and only then did he see properly the large village in which he found himself. All the houses were covered, whereas previously he had seen them with only rafters. Then Ekute spoke, "Oh, Grandfather, I have nothing, no chickens, no sheep, absolutely nothing, and at the same time I have three brothers, who also have nothing, and my old mother. Now I wanted to ask you, if you had a chicken or a sheep, whether you would give it to me (1), for I don't have

- 717 a wife either." Thereupon the grandfather laughed and said,
539 "Oh, that doesn't matter, it will all turn out all right; first
have a proper meal." Thereupon he caught a big pig, killed
it, and ate it with his grandson. The next day they slaughtered
a sheep, and so they lived happily in great style. After some
time, the grandfather said to Ekute, "Come, we shall go into
the jungle on that side, and there I shall show you everything;
you will become a great chief, and everyone will marvel at
you." So they went into the jungle until they came to a large
Copaifera (2). There the grandfather said, "Clear everything

2. Copaifera tessmannii Harms.

away carefully around this tree, down to there." The grand-
father then went down and asked, "Do you see me?" Ekute
said, "No." Then his grandfather said, "Clear that side too!"
Ekute did as he was told. "Now you must make little houses,
forty on this side and forty on that side!" That, too, Ekute did.
Then the grandfather knocked on the Copaifera and behold, it
immediately shrank and became so small that they could knock
off firewood from its branches. With this they made a large fire
on which they boiled the medicine. The grandfather went to
a small river and brought with him two bark boxes that could
run by themselves. When he called to them, "Come, come,"
they came by themselves. Now the grandfather spoke, "Dear
Ekute, all the things that I am able to give you are here. Take
these boxes, they are enchanted boxes, and do not hide them in
your village, but underneath /155/ the brook in the vicinity
of your village, and in such a way that no one can find them,
for if someone should, all is lost. Now when you return, you
merely need to utter a wish and it will be fulfilled; the boxes
will help you." Thereupon Ekute replied, "Ah, Grandfather,
I don't think what you are telling me is quite right." But the
grandfather retorted, "Oh yes it is, just go there. Your village
will grow and become large, and you will build eighty huts, for
you will marry eighty wives, just as you have built eighty houses

- 717 here, and call on the boxes." Ekute did this and called, "Come,
539 come." They did come, and Ekute was very happy and said,
"Yes, now I see that you have shown me everything." After the
grandfather had once more knocked on the tree to make it regain
its original size, the two went back into the village. There, as
a pretense in front of the people, the grandfather said that he did
not have much to give away and that Ekute was to go home again,
but that he would accompany him to the next village. This is
what he did, and on the way the grandfather once more instructed
him not to display the boxes, but to bury them under the design-
ated brook. Thereupon the grandfather again gave Ekute the
medicine that he had dropped in his ears, and Ekute was again
a human being and went with his boxes through the forest to his
village. When he came to the brook just outside his village,
which his grandfather had told him about, he dug another bed
for the brook, made a hole in the old bed, and placed the boxes
inside it. Then he threw dirt over them and redirected the
course of the brook (1). He then went into his village. The

1. This idea is not new and reminds one of the burial of a dead body in a river bed. Thus, Mgr. Le Roy reports on the Okoa, a Pygmy people on the Gabon, in the following manner. "In the middle of the forest the course of a brook is redirected and the corpse, which is wrapped in mats and pieces of bark, is lowered into the pit dug into the bed of the brook. This is done around midnight, and the women and children are kept away. A large stone is placed on the head of the corpse, and it is surrounded completely with loam to prevent the water from getting to it." See also "Das Grab im Busento /The Grave in the Busento/." /Ed., a poem by Von Platen, a German poet of the nineteenth century/.

people there were of course greatly surprised, and one of his

- 717 brothers said, "Oh, Ekute, we thought that you had died long
ago since you were gone for such a long time. What have you
359 been doing?" Ekute answered, "Ah, I have been running around
in the forest and was close to starvation, but I saw no one."
Then the brother said, "Oh, Ekute, you are stupid; why do you
go so far away? In the meantime we were close to dying of
starvation." Then Ekute went into the village where his three
houses stood, and seeing that everything was grown over, he
said, "Oh, I see that my village has been in ruins for a long
time." /156/ Thereupon he cleaned up the area near his house
so that it was nice and tidy. Overnight, however, as though by
magic hands, the entire village was made so clean and the
houses so pretty that one seldom sees the like. All the people
who passed by marveled and said, "Oh, what a charming little
village; we shall rest here a while." People brought him all
kinds of trinkets and gave them to him as a present. At this
point, he heard that there was a girl in a village to the east, and
he decided to go there immediately. But his brother said,
"What, you just came back from a journey, and nothing is in
order in your house; you have nothing beautiful on your body,
and you are not even oiled." Ekute asked his brother to arrange
his headgear nicely. He then tied a brass collar around his neck,
put brass rings on his feet and arms, and so went into the village
where the girl lived. When he came to the girl's father and spoke
to him about his daughter, the father said, "Ah, Ekute, you have
absolutely nothing for marriage, but if you want to become friends
with my daughter, that's all right too." Then Ekute went to the
girl, and when he saw that she liked him, he asked her whether
she would not like to go with him to his village later. The girl
replied, "Oh, Ekute, you're beating about the bush; I'm ready
to go with you any time." Then Ekute said, "Let us depart at once."
But the girl replied, "Ah, no, at the moment the food is on the
fire." When the food was ready, she offered it to Ekute who,
however, said, "Please, let's go; I am not hungry at the moment."
Then the girl put the food in a bundle and went with Ekute -- it
had meanwhile become night -- to his village. The next morning
Ekute asked himself in despair where he was to get the money;

- 777 he now had a wife, but no money to pay for her. Soon, indeed,
 539 the girl's father appeared and reproached Ekute for his thought-
 lessness, saying, "Give me back the girl since you cannot pay."
 Then the man turned around, and when Ekute went into his
 house, lo and behold! -- there stood five large chests full of
 spear money and a chest with cloth, as well as a great many
 other things. Thereupon he called his brother, and with him
 took all the things to his father-in-law's village. The latter
 was greatly astonished and thought to himself, "How did this
 Ekute, who just a little while ago didn't have anything, get all
 these things?" To Ekute himself, however, he said, "My dear
 son, you are heartily welcome; I see that you have an enormous
 amount of money and that you will indeed become a great chief."
 At this Ekute was, of course, very happy, and he said to him-
 self, "Indeed, now I have a wife, but no plantation from which
 to make a living." Then he remembered his grandfather's words
 and went into the forest to pick out a place for the plantation.
 During the night, chop, chop, the invisible souls cleared the
 site of the plantation by cutting down the trees and burning it
 over. When Ekute arrived /157/ the next morning, he found the
 plantation cleared and burned. Then he said, "Now the tree
 trunks still have to be removed, and we still need boundaries for
 the plots for two women, that is, for my mother and for my wife."
 The next day this also had been done, and Ekute said happily to
 his mother and wife, "Now plant ngon in the ground; it's time
 for you to get to work." Then his mother asked him, "What,
 have you prepared everything and put in the boundary lines al-
 ready?" "Certainly," said Ekute. Then the two women went to
 the plantation and planted ngon. Also the souls helped him
 build a house for his wife. Ekute then went to find another wife,
 and since he always had bride money in the house, it was only
 a short time before he had seventy-nine wives. All the planta-
 tions and all the houses were prepared for him by the souls. Then,
 one day, he heard that not far away there lived a very beautiful
 girl by the name of Odangemaköng (1). He wanted to ask for her

1. That is, "she who surpasses all in
 cleverness."

- 777 hand as well, but his brother warned him, "Oh, when you hear
539 that something is called Odangemakōng, it's very bad; you
had better not marry this girl." But Ekute answered, "Come
now, why shouldn't I marry her?" Indeed, the girl immediately
fell in love with him, and he took her back to his village as his
wife. In the evening, however, the girl said, "Please sleep
with one of your other wives tonight; I don't feel like it!"
Accordingly, Ekute did so, and when he had gone to sleep,
Odangemakōng made a fire by lighting a piece of wood and then
asked, "All these many things that Ekute has, where do they
come from? From this direction?" -- The fire kept burning. --
"From that direction?" -- The fire kept burning. -- "From that
direction?" And she pointed in the direction of the path leading
to the brook, whereupon the fire went out. Then she went along
the path, and when she came to the brook, she again made a
fire for the medicine and said, "Where is this affair that has
produced all these things? Here?" And the fire kept burning.
"And here? and here?" -- and as she asked, she pointed in all
directions, but the fire kept burning. Then she pointed down
to where she was standing, and the fire immediately went out.
She thereupon began to divert the brook's water and dug and
dug until she finally found the two little boxes. Then she said,
"So that's the affair," and opened the lids, whereupon, whoops,
all the helpful souls contained in them escaped from both boxes
and returned to the land of the souls. The wife herself went
back to the village and very quickly packed all her things.
During the night, however, Ekute came out of the house and
said, "Ah, I don't know what has got into my head; I can't
sleep at all tonight, so I want to sleep with you." But
Odangemakōng called out, "Don't come, don't come into my
house!" Then Ekute returned to his house and lay down.
Odangemakōng took all her things and returned to her father,
to whom she said, "When this man sees that all is spoiled and
finds me tomorrow, he will /158/ kill me." The next day Ekute
woke up and could not believe his eyes, because everything,
the entire village, was gone, and only the three old houses
remained as they had been at first; all the women, everything

- 777 was gone. Then his brother said, "You see what I told you?
539 If you had not married this woman, everything would have been
as it was yesterday, but as it is you have nothing left." Emam
mese masāmabo ava. (Customary conclusion of tales.)

777 It is noteworthy that homosexual intercourse is included
838 among the medicines for wealth because it is believed that
through the intimate contact the medicine of one will be trans-
ferred to the other. In a case known to me in Ebalāngon, the
passive party possessed the medicine and the active party wanted
to acquire it. Another case is related in the tale that I repro-
duce in Section 18. In actual fact it might turn out that the
effect of the medicine consists in the mutual support the two
"friends" render each other, based chiefly on the consciousness
of common guilt and the endeavor not to let this guilt be known.
This medicine is not without danger, for in the case just men-
tioned it was related that one of the men became blind and the
other leprous, and in the tale both parties become leprous or suf-
fer from frambesia.

m A variant of the medicines for wealth consists of those
which especially help one to marry or abduct women (biāñ e bōm);
another variant consists of the means to acquire influence and
respect (biāñ e bame, biāñ a vōge), such as the great Anonacea
[82.4] Pachypodanthium confius Pierre, Engl. et D. (nthm I) and the
Melastomacea Memexylon teismannii Gilg (nthm IV) which, in
addition, is also regarded as an authentic medicine for wealth.

832 In addition to the medicines for acquiring wealth, the most
important and the most common are the love medicines (biāñ
anduman). No less than about 100 different plants are placed
in the service of Venus.

If the inhabitants of a village have the idea that the love
affairs of the young people need revitalizing, a general love
medicine festival (engñežōk) is arranged, which is celebrated
under the supervision and with the cooperation of the ancestral
skulls worshipped in the Malan. Consequently, only the initiates
of the Malan may take part. The course of the festivities to-
gether with the period of preparation corresponds to that described
in the section on cult festivals /Ed., not translated/: two feast

832 Lygodium smithianum Pr. (o^zōk), used by women for ornaments.
824

I was unable to obtain any satisfactory explanation as to why a number of Ficus species, certain Amaryllidaceae, and gall nuts of the Microglossa volubilis (Wall) D.C. (m^yūvū^h) are used as love medicines.

832 Aside from plant ingredients, which are used in preponderant
825 number for love medicines, antelope horns (Fig. 61) are especially popular. These are worn as forehead or neck ornaments, and when they are supposed to be effective, they are blown like a whistle. Just as an antelope never has a single horn, but always a pair, so a person should not be alone, but with another.

777 The no less abundant shot medicines make up a third group
824 of medicines for good luck. Of the 109 plants used for these, 67
724 are rifle medicines (bi^hā^h ngā^h), that is, medicines that guarantee

[832]



Fig. 60. Love Medicine: a piece formed by two lianas so grown together that they appear as one.

a good shot with the rifle; two war medicines (bi^hā^h betā^h), 18 hunting medicines (bi^hā^h tīt), four crossbow medicines (biā^h n m^hbā^h), two medicines for hunting drives (bi^hā^h a kī^h tīt), two medicines /165/ for a lucky eye in hunting, and 14 medicines that raise the hunting efficiency of the dogs (bi^hā^h m^hyū^h) (Fig. 62).

The ingredients of the shot medicines are chosen according to various criteria. First the intention is to lure the game. Hence one takes parts of trees "loved" by the animal (that is, the animal likes to visit them, and hence will visit /Fig. 61 appears here in the original text/ the hunter who has them, even in the form of medicine). In other cases, parts that resemble animals are taken from trees, for example, the tendrils of the Ocinothis tessmannii Gilg (ngām oōk, "tail of the red-tailed monkey"), which resemble

[Text continues on page 34]

777 a monkey's tail. The hunter thus becomes similar to the animal,
 224 as it were, and the animal loses its shyness of him. In still other
 224 cases, the game is to be made "weak" while the hunter and his
 hunting dog are to be made "strong," and for this purpose parts
 are taken from corresponding plants, or they are taken from trees
 that bear much fruit in order to have similarly rich results. Finally,
 plants are chosen which are intended to remove the noxious im-
 purity of the body. /Fig. 62. Medicines of the Fang. (a) medi-
 779 cine for wealth, the root of a tree (Homalium africanum) deco-
 rated with brass wire and a brass ring; (b)-(d) medicine against
 enemy weapons; (e) medicine against enemy surprise attacks,
 fruit of the Tiliacea Duboscia macrocarpa (akak), to make
 enemies calm, peaceful (Duboscia and Leptonychia = peace linden);
 (f) medicine for successful travels; (g) medicine for speaking and
 singing well, contains the tooth of a tree cony (which is continually
 "singing"); (h) medicine for the Dichama dance; (i) medicine
 against palpitations and nervousness, the heart-shaped fruit of the
Ertela scandens, worn around the neck (makes the heart strong),
 about 1/4 actual size; (k) war medicine, leopard claw, 1/2
 actual size. / /166/ The manner of use varies: sometimes it is
 777 internal, the leaves being cut up into small pieces and eaten with
 224 the meat of the animal one has most recently sometimes killed;
 763 it is external, in the form of injections of a bark infusion, which
 have the double effect of removing the impurity from the body and
 imparting to it the essence of the plant; or a piece of wood is
 charred and then used to draw a line across the forehead, so that
 one "looks" just like the plant concerned. Most frequently, the
 impurity is removed by ablutions: either individual parts, face,
 hands, and frequently also elbows and the knee, as well as the
 rifle, are washed in medicine water; or the entire body is washed
 in a stream, on which occasion a little dam blocks off the water
 which, after the completion of the ablution, is again allowed to
 run its course so that it will carry the dirt far away downstream
 (oñe nkial). In order to guarantee the lasting efficiency of the
 777 medicines, people generally wear pieces of wood and bark as
 224 pendants on neck chains, hunting pouches, satchels, belts, and so
 forth.

769 The veneration of skulls likewise occurs in the case of the
 224 hunting medicines. The skull of a man killed by violent means,
 826 whose corpse remained on the spot (if the man belongs to the same
 kinship group), is kept in a bark box and taken care of as in an-
 cestor worship. When a huntsman kills a wild animal, for exam-
 ple, he takes the first piece that falls to him in the distribution of
 the meat to the skull as a thanks offering. This piece consists of
 the sex organs and the flesh around them (ekījā, see Fig. 92 in
 Vol. I). After he has taken it to the skull, he carries it off again
 [262] to eat it himself. On the other hand, if there has been no luck
 on the hunt, a chicken is killed for the "man" in the box so he
 will see to it that a wild animal soon appears in front of his
 protégé's rifle and will be hit as effectively as he was in his time.

721 In addition, the Fang have a great war medicine, a celebra-
 759 tion which is called ahgūngu and is a companion festivity to the
engongeschok. On this occasion, a sacred place is set up, a sub-
 terranean corridor similar to that described in the case of the Ngi
 /Ed., not translated/ is dug, and a dwarf antelope, Cephalophus
 [825] melanocheilus Gray (ogbwūñ), which must have been caught alive,
 is brought to the place. Then the medicine man stations himself
 at one end of the corridor, and all the other men, armed with rifles,
 [124] hang a seed of the Sorindeia rubriflora Engl. (afāne(h)) as medi-
 cine around their necks, and crawl -- the first with the antelope
 in his arms -- through the corridor. At the exit, the medicine man
 gives all of them, including the antelope, a medicine. The
 antelope is thereupon released, and it is believed that when a sur-
 prise attack is planned and the enemy has got wind of it, the ani-
 mal will appear and thereby warn the attackers. By way of medi-
 cines to secure the /167/ necessary courage for such an attack, five
 different ones are available.

● 777 The medicines for trapping and fishing are rarer than the shot
 726 medicines, a sign that these occupations are more in the Fangwe's
 124 blood than open hunting. I have taken down only eight plants for
 fish medicines and twelve for trap medicines.

777 Other medicines for good luck are used for successful buying (two), speaking and singing well (about a dozen), faultless drumming (two), wrestling (29), the Jaunde game of chance (eight), and to make edible plants flourish (nine, see Section 5 /Ed., Vol. 1/).

The second class of medicines discussed in this part consists of those used to ward off misfortune. In this category the most important are the medicines against theft (approximately 30), against adultery committed by the women (two), against the shrewishness of wives (one), against rivals among women (three), against forgetfulness and stage fright (three), against rain (only a few, see Section 14), against enemy weapons, against the consequences of cohabiting during the day (seven), of sleeping with pregnant women (for the last two cases there are even prophylactic medicines), and finally, against consequences that occur if one eats unclean animals (seven).

3. Medicines against Cult Maladies

754 In the description of the cults /Ed., not translated/ it was shown that transgressions of mores resulted in punishments in the form of illness. These cult maladies are real illnesses of the body, but they can be cured only by the power whose anger has caused them. For that reason, they could also have been mentioned in the description of the cults. Every cult power is able to impose a malady, so someone can be Sao sick (Saidong-mba sick), Bokung (Elong sick), Schok sick and Ngi sick; we have already become acquainted with Malan sufferers. Since in the south Ngi is the most common and most feared cult power, the most frequent and most serious cult malady there comes from him.

755 I saw two cult maladies treated. One case involved a boy who pretended to have Bokung sickness because he did not want to work any more; the second case involved a man who had been shot in the chest during the war and claimed that he had been punished this way by Ngi.

Bokung sickness is supposed to be recognizable by the trembling

171

Moral /Anthropophyteia, Yearbooks
for Folkloristic Inquiries and Explora-
tions into the Historical Development
of Sexual Morality/, edited by Dr.
Friedrich S. Krauss (1912), Vol. 9,
p. 31.

833 Over against the great mass of women, the bebōbān, who
777 through sexual intercourse bring the man misfortune, there is the
exceptional phenomenon of the woman who among the Ntum is
called ayūē III and among the Fang ayā. Union with her brings
both parties, the woman as well as the man, good fortune. At
the same time her influence is more important for the man, for
instance, during military and hunting expeditions. If, for in-
stance, the man goes hunting on the day after having had inter-
course with such a woman, he is bound to see a wild animal soon
and to kill it. If he goes to war, "his rifle will hit its mark,"
whereas the enemy's will not. For this eventuality, moreover, he
has the woman give him a medicine, namely red wood that she
has ground in a certain way (bā-ayā, mfumu-bā). The woman,
too, is lucky on this day if she goes "hunting" for fish, that is,
if she goes on a fish drive (a lūk), or works on the farm (see Vol.
I, p. 56).

But -- as was said -- such women who bring good fortune are
a rarity; the majority of women bring misfortune. If a man goes
hunting on the day after coition, all the animals evade him in a
wide arc (a bāh), hence the name ebōbān.

[833] In the peculiar custom of the miāk consecration I see proof of
775 the fact that the Pangwe know the harmful effect of excessive sexual
775 intercourse. The word miāk actually means the castrated animal,
554 in particular the buck goat (see Vol. I, p. 76), and here it is
831 applied symbolically to a person who through a public and solemn
declaration is for a time excluded from sexual intercourse. After
a successfully concluded war, more rarely upon some other occasion,
somebody (usually the chief) decides to consecrate his son or his
daughter to purity. Naturally, neither of the latter may as yet be
acquainted with sexual matters, in other words, they will only be

- 551 25. ogbwě, from a gbwě madžō = to repeat things, something like chatterbox, by which the man makes himself popular because people like to hear it;
26. ekō = Lannea longifoliolata Engl., Anacardiaceae, so he will be just as popular, as the tree is to the touraco which settle in its crown and eat its fruit (S.).

IV. Names that are supposed to bring luck.

- 551 777 27. obū'du, from obū't = the grass Paspalum, so he will get things in great quantities, just as the grass exists in great quantities (S.);
28. ekō'mo, from a kō'mo bīm = to acquire things, that is, he will acquire things himself since he has no sisters, etc., through whom he gets money, in other words, he is a self-made man (Jaunde);
29. atē'nā, from a tē'na kū'm = to become suddenly rich, to come up in the world, a parvenu in the good sense (S.);
30. atāhdānā, likewise (Jaunde);
31. esī or besī, from evū' besī = the capacity to acquire things, that is, he will acquire something for himself (S.);
32. olū, from a lū' bīm = to forge things, that is, he will earn money through working as a smith (the only handicraft in our sense).

551 V. Names intended to indicate that the man will be the terror of his enemies.

33. obā'm = bird of prey, chicken thief, a name which could also be included in the previous section if it is intended that the bearer will receive the things (onomatopoetic, bāb; hence o-bām).

- 551 22. akulabān, from akūl [1] = paws, claws, abān = otter, i.e., the girl steals about as softly as an otter;
 23. ntōde-abān = single otter, as above;
 24. mōneabān = small otter;
 25. abāne-mū, from abān = otter, mūgebū = to adorn oneself, to go about adorned. /283/

III. Names that are supposed to bring luck.

- 551 26. ajēkabe, from a jē = difficult, a kabe = to buy, to exchange; may also be included in the previous group since the girl has such good qualities that the price cannot readily be realized;
 27. majē, from a jē = to wake up quickly, the girl is supposed to wake up quickly so that she will soon bear fruit (that is, bring in the purchase price); see divorce (Vol. II, pages 120 and 121);
 28. angōho or angōnemāne, from ngōn = girl, a māne = to be ready, that is, the stage of girlhood is supposed to be over soon;
 29. ajāniekū, from ajān-nkū = Liliacea, purchasable medicine (nkū); the girl is supposed to bring in as much as she would if her father had this medicine;
 30. medzē, a dzē a tōbō a dzē = she has fulfilled the time for staying in (her) village, that is, she will marry at the proper time;
 31. metō, from a tōbō = to sit, I am sitting, that is, she should not be forced to work too much (by her future husband, of course), but instead she should remain seated in the village.

551 IV. Names intended to frighten away, in this case presumptuous suitors or secret lovers.

32. atāma, from a tāma = to break down (a village), "because the father would destroy the village out of grief

525 and wars have frequently been the consequences of the gambling
578 mania. Although in more recent times the game of chance has
been prohibited in the area controlled by the German govern-
ment, nonetheless considerable homage is paid the gambling
demon in secret.

525 In order to insure luck at the game, a whole series of medi-
cines is made, which, according to the view already familiar
● 111 to us, transfer the properties of plants to the counters; for in-
stance, plants which make them burning hot (Boehmeria,
824 Urticaceae), sharp, peppery (Spilanthes, Compositae), and
strong (Carpolabia, Polygalaceae). Others are intended to pre-
serve for the owner the objects that he has put down as his
stake in the game. In this category we find burrs (Desmodium)
and winding Araceae. /318/ /Fig. 118 appears here in the
original text. /

5. Wrestling

526 Wrestling matches are very frequent, especially in the
southern Pangwe region, both to settle personal quarrels -- in
this case the defeated wrestler was formerly sometimes
squeezed half to death and cases of death have even occurred --
as well as for sport. In the latter case one might actually speak
of a sports festival to which the drum summons young and old,
man and woman, from afar. I shall dispense with a detailed
description, however,

In wrestling, certain rules of the game are observed, for
instance, that both wrestlers must be as nearly matched as
possible, and this determines whether they turn down the chal-
lenge (a kññ nññ) or take it up (a mōm nññ).

Our picture (Fig. 118) represents a snapshot of such wrestlers
(nññ I, from a ññ = to wrestle). To the left one can see a group
of young men waiting (a ñññ) to be challenged (a ññ = to
challenge). Before the match the wrestler rubs dust onto the
palms of his hands and his arms (a ññ mññ ññ enñm = to rub
dust [on the] arm) to make them less slippery.

90 radical with feminine connotations (yi = to wish, also meaning "to need," "to cry"; it conveys an idea of "desiring," in contrast to kômbô, related to kôm = to arrange, put in order, do properly, and bo = to do, make, conveying an idea of "will"; the passive form of yi, yan, means both "duty" and "to be well," "to suit"). Much research needs to be done while there is still time.

d. Sorcery, Possession

75 Malignant sorcery, ngbwel, is generally attributed to a sorcerer, nnem (plur: beyem, cf. yem = to know, to dream), being possessed by a malevolent being, an évu (Fang évu, évu). The évu is not an immaterial spirit but a living being, an animal like a crab or centipede, and lodging in the internal organs of the nnem. At an autopsy it is often found in the form of a polyp or tumor, a fibroid tumor in women. It may even happen that the nnem's body does not show such an indication, because the évu has escaped, but there will be some traces of it, fluids, distention of the stomach, colon, or gall bladder.

76 In such cases, as has been said, the corpse is not buried in the usual manner but is burned, thrown into a river, or buried at a crossroads far from the village, in order to prevent the nnem's kôn from returning to haunt relatives and neighbors.

The possessed person may be unaware of the possession, but he is held no less responsible for the harm caused by the évu. The latter goes out at night while the nnem is asleep and feeds on the blood, metyi, hence strength, tyi of its victims, who fall ill, grow weak and die, or it eats their nlem (heart and lungs), which brings on madness or mental decay and often death, too. The évu also feeds on eggs, on metyi /ac/, and on milk, preferably women's milk (menyañ, from nyañ = to give the breast, cf. -nyañ = mother, in compound words), food which village people will not touch. When the évu has trouble in getting food, it may turn against the nnem and kill it for nourishment or, if the nnem is a woman, it may attack the children in her womb. Aside from these occasions, ngbwel is an advantage to the nnem, even when it is unconscious; he benefits from the strength accumulated by the évu during its nocturnal hunts; furthermore, the évu assists him, brings a sort of luck to his undertakings, which is natural, since the évu gains from the nnem's intermediation. This kind of luck, asé (from a verb, sé, with like meaning: a nga sé

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77 akum = he has become rich by ngbwel, is to be distinguished from ordinary, accidental luck, ma'a, by its lasting character, which soon arouses public suspicion — this is one of the visible symptoms of ngbwel.

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683 The involuntary nnem was generally put to death, more easily than the conscious sorcerer, who knew how to protect himself. Nevertheless, it was possible to treat a nnem, by means of a very drastic purification involving physiological as well as psychological catharsis and sometimes by real surgical operations /117/, to which in most cases the patient succumbed. Today the European administration usually prevents the execution of beyem, but their relatives often succeed in persuading them to kill themselves. After an epidemic of meningitis at Ambam in 1948, two men and two young women, accused by a bwiti diviner of having caused the death of a dozen children by involuntary ngbwel, threw themselves into the N'Tem within the month. In former times, beyem were burned by being covered with wood in such a way as to prevent both the évu and their nsim from escaping; they were also drowned or buried alive, preferably in the bed of a stream that had been diverted and was then turned back to its old course after the burial.

754 The conscious nnem is both more and less dangerous. Bound to his évu by a kind of pact, he directs its activity instead of allowing it to kill at random as the unconscious nnem does. Therefore, he is more dangerous to his enemies but less so to his kin, although the concluding and maintenance of the alliance with the évu requires him to sacrifice members of his family.

A nnem with a strong personality, tyi anen a nlem ayet, with great strength and a hard heart, can succeed in really controlling his évu and making it a servant that will procure him wealth and power, rid him of his enemies, and confer supernatural powers on him, such as the ability to be in two places at once /bilocation/, to move objects from a distance /telekinesis/, divination, etc. But ngbwel always remains a dangerous art. First of all, the nnem knows that he is condemned after death to be a white kôn, forbidden to cross the ékanga bekôn, the bridge of the dead, to seek the ancestors, mañ ayat, beyond the sea. There are immediate dangers, in addition to that final condemnation. First, the ever present risk that the évu will dominate the nnem and weaken the latter. Next, the risk of a kind of reaction if the évu attacks a stronger nnem or a mie well protected by a bian provided with white magic. Finally, /there is the risk/ of

The skin of a bush cat is part of the *biang-akamayong* called "Nsin."

The Mvung.—A triangular piece of iron filled with medicine, used to keep away witches, is also part of the *biang-akamayong*.

Biang-akong or *biang-abal* (war medicine).—This is also part of the *biang-akamayong*, and the shots from the guns of an enemy are of no avail.

One other important fetich hangs with the *biang-akamayong*.

A piece of very hard wood. Only a certain kind of woman is selected to find this wood; she is called a special or *selected* woman on account of certain peculiarities connected with her, e.g., she always fails to catch fish, she may try all day but will not succeed in catching fish. The husband of such a woman, after intercourse with her, fails to catch fish the next day, he also fails to work. This is the kind of woman always selected to find this wood; it is hard wood, she is a hard woman, and she is called *Ewanga one alert* (the woman who is hard). This medicine is also called *biang-akong*, and shot from the guns of an enemy will not harm.

This is the *Biang-akamayong*.

XIII.—Witchcraft. *Ewa*. (Witch.)

If a person goes out to make witch (witch medicine, or play witch to harm others) he dies. The people take him to the backyard. Other people say, "We want to take the witch." If the corpse is a female, they open the belly. If the corpse is a male, they open the heart. They see the witch, they take it. If they bring the witch, they lay it on the smoke shelf. It dries. When finished drying they say, "We will use it as medicine."

This is *Ewa* (witch).

Cursing dead Relations.—Written at Foulahifong, Nkomo river, April 13th, 1898. Told me by Övön; fully confirmed by Ogandaga and Interpreter Roby.

Ewawong (to curse dead relations).—This is a Fang custom. A man has a palaver with another, or goods stolen. He desires to get even with the thief. He calls a friend and curses his friend's dead relations, saying,

"Go and kill that person for me, or go and make him pay me goods; if you do so, I will then pay you for having cursed your dead relations." It is a serious matter to have dead relations cursed, and the friend feels very bad. He must do as bid, or he is branded as a coward, and after he has completed his task he then makes claim for payment.

Ngi me bi jum dii, ngi me ta mibia (If I do it, may I see the corpses [of my people]). A Fang way of swearing an oath.

Awé ye mibiam wia, yiaji me bat (My friend, by the corpses of your relations, kill those people for me).

Notes on Ekwanda (a curse).

Bong d'opape (a curse that kills).